

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1019

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y TO ADD REF LINE, AND CORRECT
SUBJ LINE AND CORRECT PARA ONE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR PFOR NO UR

REF: OSLO 01018

SUBJ: PROPOSED SOVIET CONSULATE IN TROMSO

1. IN THE COURSE OF DISCUSSING SOVIET PROPOSAL TO OPEN CONSULATE IN TROMSO THE EXCHANGE FOR NORWEGIAN CONSULATE IN LENINGRAD, FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND ASKED ME WHAT I THOUGHT THE OFFICIAL USG REACT DN WOULD BE TO SUCH A DEVELOPMENT. HE CONFIRMED THAT NORWAY HAD NO INTEREST IN LENINGRAD WHERE ITS INTERESTS ARE PROTECTED BY SWEDEN. I INTERPRETED HIS MUSING-ALoud REMARK ABOUT ASKING FOR MURMANSK IN EXCHANGE FOR TROMSO AS ALSO SOLICITING OUR REACTION.

2. GIVEN FRYDENLUND'S PERSONAL INCLINATION TO BE RESPONSIVE ON THIS QUESTION, AND THE LONGER-TERM TREND IN NORWEGIAN THINKING TO STRENGTHEN THEIR "GOOD NEIGHBORLY" RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT THE SOVIETS WILL SUCCEED IN THEIR EFFORT. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES IF I COULD TO BACK TO FRYDENLUND WITH INFORMATION INDICATING:

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(A) USG TAKES DIM VIEW OF SUCH A DEVELOPMENT IN A SENSITIVE AREA OF NORWAY.

(B) SEVERAL COUNTRIES HAVE CHOSEN TO RESIST PERSISTENT SOVIET EFFORTS TO OPEN CONSULATES, AND STILL HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH USSR;

(C) SEVERAL COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE SOVIET CONSULATES HAVE HAD DIFFICULTIES BECAUSE OF INTELLIGENCE AND OVERLY ACTIVE INFORMATION ACTIVITY E.G. AMONG STUDENTS (TROMSO UNIV. HAS A VERY ACTIVE LEFTIST STUDENT AND PROFESSOR BODY).

(D) WE CONSIDER OUR OFFICE IN TROMSO TO BE VERY SMALL RECIPROCITY FOR THE LARGE NUMBER OF NORWEGIAN CONSULATES AND THE INFORMATION CENTERS IN THE U.S.

3. WHEN DCM ASKED FRYDENLUND WHETHER SOVIETS HAVE SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO U.S. INFORMATION OFFICE IN TROMSO HE SAID NO, THAT REFERENCE WAS ALWAYS TO FACT THAT THERE ARE SOME 10 CONSULS THERE. (IN FACT THEY ARE ALL HONORARY).

4. THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON THIS QUESTION WITHIN FOREIGN MINISTRY. ONE SCHOOL ARGUES THAT SOVIETS OWE THE NORWEGIANS A CONSULATE SINCE NORWAY CLOSED ARCHANGELSK CONSULATE AND SOVIETS STILL HAVE THEIRS ON SVALBARD. ANOTHER WOULD SIMPLY TELL SOVIETS THEY CAN SELECT HONORARY CONSUL FOR TROMSO.

5. I WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW WHETHER WE WOULD CONSIDER MURMANSK-FOR-TROMSO AN INTERESTING EXCHANGE--ASSUMING THE RIGHT NORWEGIAN WERE IN MURMANSK. THERE IS A DANGER, HOWEVER, THAT OTHER POSTS (E.G. HAVANA, SOFIA) WILL HAVE PRIORITY OVER MURMANSK IN A STRINGENT BUDGET PERIOD, AND THAT NORWEGIANS WOULD NOT BE PREPARED TO MAKE OPENING OF CONSULATES STRICTLY SIMULTANEOUS, AND THAT ANY NORWEGIAN ASSIGNED TO MURMANSK WOULD BE OPERATING UNDER VERY RESTRICTIVE INSTRUCTIONS.
BYRNE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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